

Monthly Update – October 2013

# Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

## OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating efforts on selected crops and regions to help transform the country's food security.

## SERVING UP BETTER HEALTH

In order to improve the diet of pregnant women and young children in Tanzania, USAID-TAPP has been integrating nutrition education and sweet potato cultivation in its health and nutrition program. During the month of October, 21,000 vines of orange flesh sweet potatoes (OFSP) were distributed to project farmer groups in Turiani and Morogoro regions. OFSP is not traditionally eaten in Africa, but it is very high in vitamin A, a critical micronutrient that is lacking in many African diets. Consuming these micronutrients can result in improved physical development and overall well-being. Infants and pre-school children have greater chances of survival, better health, and increased intellectual capacity. Women are likely to see improved pregnancy outcomes and an increase in productivity.

In addition, USAID-TAPP health and nutrition specialists trained 1,083 individuals from Iringa, Mbeya, Morogoro, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Tanga, and Manyara, on good health, positive nutritional habits, and improved food utilization. This knowledge will, in turn, contribute to the elimination of the current food gaps and nutritional deficit in Tanzania. In conjunction with these trainings, project partners Global Service Corps (GSC) and Rungwe Smallholders Tea Growers Association (RSTGA) extended the project's outreach services with their communal trainings. Global Service Corps supported 385 households with access to community gardens through the establishment of keyhole gardens in Kilimanjaro and Tanga. Among the beneficiaries, 127 were from vulnerable communities. RSTGA trained 475 individuals in Rugwe living with HIV/AIDS on nutritional interventions. The organization also supported group members with the establishment of kitchen gardens for easier access to nutritional vegetables in their households.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

*A keyhole garden managed by vision impaired students at the Irete School for the Blind in Irete, Lushoto.*

## TURNING ARID SOIL INTO ARABLE LAND

The region of Dodoma, once viewed as an arid land with lack of permanent rivers for irrigation, is now the latest addition to USAID-TAPP's zone of intervention. In October, 19 new farmer groups from Kongwa and Mpwapwa districts in Dodoma were added to the program. Project agronomist, Deogratias Ndeonio, spent several weeks visiting and training these new groups in Mweseleni and Mlali Juu villages on good agricultural practices. Group members have since applied technologies such as land preparation, raised beds, and using sorghum as a live barrier in their production. The selected crops of production are sweet pepper, tomato, and cabbage. Because the farmer groups are still new to the project, all of their crops are still under production.

In contrast to the arid land ecology in Dodoma, farmers from the Swahili coast were not only rejoicing about the good weather, but were content with the profits made from their harvests, as a result of implementing USAID-TAPP's basic practices in their crop productions. Along the coast of Dar es Salaam, the Saire Farmers Group

harvested 18,800 kgs of tomatoes under drip irrigation, raking in an attractive sum of Tsh 8,000,000 (\$5,096) from total sales. Just a few kilometers away, the Mkuranga Green Farmer Group made Tsh 4,000,000 (\$2,548) profit from 5,000 kgs of watermelon using furrow irrigation. From the sunny side of Pemba, the Jambo Cooperative Farmer Group harvested 4,000 kgs of watermelon and also made Tsh 4,000,000 (\$2,548) in profits. The group members have used some of the proceeds and additional funds from their individual savings to invest in a Tsh 8,000,000 (\$5,096) borehole project. In the neighboring island of Unguja, the Twende Pamoja and Central Cluster farmer groups both harvested sweet pepper, resulting in profits of Tsh 2,500,000 (\$1,592) from 2,450 kgs and Tsh 2,600,000 (\$1,656) from 2,800 kgs, respectively.

## MARKET LINKAGES GIVE FARMERS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

*Group members from the Nyamandomondo Farmer Group in Iringa rural, pack sweet peppers for transport to the market.*

For farmers to survive in the changing economic environment spurred by globalization, not only do they need to be equipped with modern postharvest facilities, but they should also have access to market information and a market to sell their produce at the right price. During this month, USAID-TAPP marketing specialists supported four farmer groups in the Southern Highlands with access to new market opportunities and improved their business relationships with buyers. Manyandomondo, Idete, Kitelewasi, and Tupendane farmer groups in Iringa were the farmer groups selected for trainings in crop diversification, capacity building on business skills and agro-entrepreneur development, and market linkage to domestic markets. This approach focuses on building skills and knowledge of farmers to engage them effectively in domestic and international markets. It also emphasizes on a market orientation that enables smallholders to successfully link themselves to potential markets in order to produce what they can sell, rather than trying to sell what they have produced.

As a result of using this approach, each farmer group benefitted with a fruitful profit from total sales of their products. Sweet pepper sales have led Manyandomondo Farmer Group to earn a profit of Tsh 491,410 (\$313) from 1,200 kgs, and Tupendane Farmer Group to sell 1,400kgs, making a profit of Tsh 706,500 (\$450). Furthermore, the Idete Farmer Group raked in Tsh 1,962,500 (\$1,250) from 15,000 kgs of cabbage and Kitelewasi Tsh 138,160 (\$88) from 448 kg of Irish potatoes. In addition to this, the marketing specialists also conducted market and enterprise visits to major markets in Iringa, Makambako, and Njombe regions during October. These visits allowed for collection of vital market information on crop varieties and products, price and frequency, and volume of delivery, so that they can assess the demand for products in short supply and identify those in high demand. This information is used to advise farmers on what they can cultivate in their next production season. The visits were also used as an important vehicle to identify potential buyers and to establish reliable contacts. These strong initial profits from the groups are expected to increase as farmers continue to see results of crops still under production.

### Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

#### "Increased food security through enhanced productivity"

USAID-TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification, and improved market access. Visit [www.tanzania-agric.org](http://www.tanzania-agric.org) for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The content is the sole responsibility of Fintrac and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.